BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from **Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan & Tamil Nadu** on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, *etc*. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's *A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan* (1982, 2nd ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth's *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region* (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 2001. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional Referees, *etc*., are at the end. For selection of breeding criteria 'Probable, Possible, Confirmed', see *Pitta* # 82, February 1998, p. 4.

ANDHRA PRADESH

CHITTOOR DISTRICT

Horsley Hills 2000 (VS)

30.ix: BLACK EAGLE 2; BROWN SHRIKE hrd; YELLOW-THROATED BULBUL 2; LARGE-CROWNED LEAF WARBLER 4.

Rishi Valley 2000 (VS)

1.vi: BAYA PRB, 10-15 N under const.

18: KOEL POB, in song; BROWN FLYCATCHER hrd; MAGPIE-ROBIN POB, in song.

21: BROWN FISH OWL mobbed by 2 Treepies.

24: BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER PRB, pair excavating N-hole on coconut tree; ASHY PRINIA POB, in br., plm; BAYA POB, courting, 20+ N; BLACK-HEADED MUNIA 20+ on OH wires.

25: BROWN FLYCATCHER 1 juv; FRANKLIN'S PRINIA POB, in br., plm.

29: WHITE-BROWED BULBUL CB, incubating.

2.vii: SPOTTED MUNIA POB, ad., entering N.

5: BROWN FLYCATCHER 2 ad., 1 juv.

15: IORA PRB, song and disp.; THICK-BILLED FLOWERPECKER 1 (scarce in Rishi Valley).

16: ASHY-CROWNED FINCH-LARK PRB, disp.; RED-RUMPED SWALLOW PRB, Bird carrying wet mud to N under const.; BRAHMINY MYNA CB, carrying food in bill; INDIAN ROBIN CB, carrying food in bill.

22: BRAHMINY KITE 1 (uncommon).

23: SCAVENGER VULTURE 1 (uncommon).

2.viii: SHIKRA; TREEPIE; PURPLE-RUMPED SUNBIRD. All feeding on winged termites.

3: BONELLI'S EAGLE pair.

5: BAYA CB, 35+ active N.

6: PARADISE FLYCATCHER 1F.

11: ALPINE SWIFT 7.

22: TAWNY EAGLE pair disp., in flight; COMMON SWALLOW 2.

27: ALPINE SWIFT 4.

2.ix: SCAVENGER VULTURE 1.

5: GOLDEN ORIOLE hrd.

6: SMALL GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA PRB, pair mating. M offered F a tiny caterpillar as nuptial gift; GREY WAGTAIL 1.

8: PIED CRESTED CUCKOO 1 juv., without long tail & crest, with flock of White-headed Babblers.

10: LARGE PIED WAGTAIL PRB, with N-mat.

16: GREENISH LEAF WARBLER hrd; FOREST WAGTAIL hrd.

23: PITTA hrd.

24: BLACK DRONGO in tail moult; LESSER WHITETHROAT 2.

25: BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER hrd (uncommon in Rishi Valley).

2.x: KOEL CB, yng begging food from House Crow.

7: HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO hrd.

8: GREY DRONGO 3.

9: LITTLE BROWN DOVE PRB, courting and calling; PARADISE FLYCATCHER 1M.

10: BLUE ROCK THRUSH 1.

13: GREY HORNBILL 1; RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER.

14: BLUE-THROATED FLYCATCHER hrd.

15: KESTREL 2; HARRIER (unidentified species) 1; LITTLE BROWN DOVE CB, 1 N in *Acacia* sp.; YELLOW-EYED BABBLER POB in song; COMMON BABBLER CB, feeding yng that was begging. Aggressively chases away a Brown Shrike; WHITE-THROATED MUNIA PRB, pair carrying N-mat., to *Acacia* sp.

23.xi: BROWN FISH OWL hrd.

9.xii: BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER 1; BLACK-NAPED MONARCH hrd; INDIAN TREE PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni* 8; GREY WGTAIL 35+ on OH wires; ROSEFINCH 50+.

10: BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER 1.

31: BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER hrd.

HYDERABAD DISTRICT

Banjara Hills 1.ii (AP)

MAGPIE-ROBIN POB, M singing from tree-tops.

CIEFL Campus (10.i) (JVDM)

BARN OWL; GREY HORNBILL 2.

Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park

4.x.2000 (SU): WHITE-BREASTED MUNIA CB, ad., feeding yng.

5: INDIAN MOORHEN CB, 1 ad., + 2 yng; STONE CURLEW 3.

29.i.2001 (BH): BOOTED WARBLER 10; YELLOW-THROATED SPARROW.

MEDAK DISTRICT

ICRISAT Campus 29.i (BH)

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK F imm; HEN HARRIER F; SHORT-EARED OWL 1; RUFOUS-TAILED SHRIKE *Lanius isabellinus* imm. (New record for A.P.); COMMON CHIFFCHAFF 2; GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK 200+.

10-11.ii (BSAP members): PAINTED STORKS CB, birds on N, incubating; DUCKS *Anatidae* 3,000+; HARRIER sp. 300-400 roosting; SHORT-EARED OWL 2.

Patancheru: Chintalacheruvi village 12.i (SU,JK)

WHITE IBIS 40; WHITE-NECKED STORK 2.

NELLORE DISTRICT

Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary 25.xii.2000 (VS)

INDIAN SHAG 6; GREY PELICAN 3 (no N due to low water level); NIGHT HERON 50+ ad., & juv; OPENBILL STORK CB, (12 N) 100+ birds; WHITE IBIS 10.

Pulicat Bird Sanctuary 24-25.xii.2000 (VS)

GREY PELICAN 100+; GREATER FLAMINGO 8000+; BAR-HEADED GOOSE 150+; BLACK-TAILED GODWIT 100+.

RANGAREDDI DISTRICT

Chevella (RM)

15.i: GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD 2 from halted train.

Gangaram Tank (SAK)

18.i: PURPLE HERON 1; WHITE-EYED POCHARD 15; COTTON TEAL 150+; COOT 200+. CB, some with yng; PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA 7 non-br plm; BRONZE-WINGED JACANA CB, 13 ad., 5 imm.

WARANGAL DISTRICT

Kazipet Lake 24.xii.2000 (MSK,KV)

YELLOW BITTERN CB, 1 yng; PURPLE MOORHEN CB, 5 yng; BRAHMINY MYNA CB, 50+ yng; WHITE-THROATED MUNIA CB, 4 yng.

KERALA

ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

Kochi 21-23.iv.2000 (VS)

LITTLE CORMORANT PRB, N under const; NIGHT HERON CB, N on Mango *Mangifera indica*, yng out of N; KOEL POB singing; MAGPIE-ROBIN POB singing.

Trivandrum city 24-30.iv.2000 (VS)
KOEL POB, in song; LESSER GOLDEN-BACKED WOODPECKER PRB, pair at cavity in *Embelica* sp.; JUNGLE MYNA pair at woodpecker N; MAGPIE-ROBIN POB, in song; LOTEN'S SUNBIRD M in eclipse plm.

KANNUR DISTRICT
Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary 9-11.iii.2000 (VS)
BLUE-WINGED PARAKEET C; BROWN-BREASTED FLYCATCHER C; WHITE-BELLIED BLUE FLYCATCHER 3-4; MALABAR GREY HORNBILL CB, 1 N, ad., feeding through slit; YELLOW-BROWED BULBUL CB, ad., feeding juv.; SMALL SUNBIRD PRB, carrying N-mat.; RUBY-THROATED BULBUL C; QUAKER BABBLER C; LARGE GOLDEN-BACKED WOODPECKER drumming; HILL MYNA C; BAY-BANDED CUCKOO hrd; BROWN HAWK-OWL hrd; GREY-FRONTED GREEN PIGEON 50-60 on fruiting *Ficus* sp.; GREY-HEADED BULBUL; EMERALD DOVE CB, N in small tree. Bird incubating. Also 8-10 birds together on mud road; FAIRY BLUEBIRD C; SLATY-HEADED SCIMITAR BABBLER hrd; MALABAR WHISTLING THRUSH hrd; BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE 1; MALABAR TROGON C, in pairs, hrd; LARGE CROWNED LEAF WARBLER; LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO 1; WHTIE-BELLIED TREEPIE hrd; WHITE-RUMPED SPINETAIL 3; BLACK-CRESTED BAZA 3; RUFOUS-TAILED FLYCATCHER; BLUE-HEADED ROCK THRUSH 2M; GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER hrd; CRESTED GOSHAWK CB, N with eggs;

TAMIL NADU

CHENNAI DISTRICT
Pallikaranai Marsh 5.xi.2000 (VS)
PURPLE HERON 2; OPENBILL STORK 150+ in flt; PURPLE MOORHEN 10+; CLAMOROUS REED WARBLER hrd.

CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT
Madras Crocodile Bank 6-11.x.2000 (SAT)
BRAHMINY KITE 1 juv; PIED CRESTED CUCKOO 1; LOTEN'S SUNBIRD 1; FOREST WAGTAIL 5.

COIMBATORE DISTRICT
Coimbatore: Kuruchi Tank 23.xii.2000 (SAK)
GREY PELICAN 4; COMMON TEAL 200+; SPOTBILL 56.

KANCHEEPURAM DISTRICT
Nanmangalam Reserve Forest 5.xi.2000 (VS)
GREAT HORNED OWL 3; ORANGE-HEADED GROUND THRUSH 1 & ORANGE-HEADED (WHITE-THROATED) GROUND THRUSH 1, 7seen together.

NILGIRIS DISTRICT
Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary: Masinagudi (SAK)
24.xii.2000: BROWN-BREASTED FLYCATCHER; CHESTNUT-BELLIED NUTHATCH; SMALL SUNBIRD.
Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary: Ombetta (SAK)
26.xii.2000: GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER 1M.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; *c.*-approxim-ately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; OH-overhead; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Resp-respectively; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.
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LITERARY *WREN*DITIONS

"These so-called pelagic birds—the albatrosses, petrels, shearwaters, storm-petrels, skuas, jaegers, and a few shorebirds, among others—spend almost their entire lives over water. Unlike pelicans, cormorants, and most gulls, which haunt coastal waters but return toward land each night to roost, the pelagics may wander thousands of miles from shore, spending years at a stretch of sea. When a young black-footed albatross, hatched on Midway Island in the Hawaiian chain, opens its seven-and-a-half-foot wings and lumbers into flight for the first time, it will not touch ground again for three years, during which it wanders the Pacific from Japan to the Aleutians, and south as far as Mexico...

"Spending months a sea raises a significant difficulty for pelagic birds: finding something to drink. Seawater is saltier than the bird's own blood, so much so that drinking a quart of ocean water requires a quart *and a half* of freshwater to flush out the toxic salts—a quick route to death by dehydration. But tubenoses, gulls, and many other seagoing birds have specialized glands, located above each eye, which filter excess salt from the bloodstream, expelling it down the nostrils. They have perpetually runny noses, from the endless drip of concentrated salt that trickles down their beaks."

—Weidensaul, Scott (2000): *Living on the Wind. Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds.* Pp. 420. North Point Press, New York.

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